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July 30, 2004

Dear County and District Superintendents of Schools:

**REVISED JOINT STATEMENT ON INDIVIDUALS QUALIFIED TO PROVIDE
MANDATED HEARING SCREENING TO PUPILS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The following amended information updates the joint statement on individuals qualified to provide mandated hearing screening to pupils in public schools issued January 24, 2003. Key amendments are in underline/bold and strike out.

The *California Code of Regulations (CCR)*, Title 17, Section 2952(c)(1) provides that,

...each pupil shall be given a hearing test in kindergarten or first grade and in second, fifth, eighth, tenth or eleventh grade and upon first entry into the California public school system." The purpose of this letter is to provide advice regarding individuals qualified to provide this mandated hearing screening in California public schools.

The *California Education Code Section 49452* requires that such hearing tests be

...adequate in nature and shall be given only by duly qualified supervisors of health employed by the district; or by certificated employees of the district or of the county superintendent of schools who possess the qualifications prescribed by the Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing; or by contract with an agent duly authorized to perform such services by the county superintendent of schools of the county in which the district is located, under guidelines established by the Board of Education; or accredited schools or colleges of optometry, osteopathic medicine, or medicine.

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For school districts choosing to meet the annual hearing testing requirement using district employees to provide testing, the following prioritized list is provided to give guidance on which district employees are qualified to administer hearing testing to pupils in public schools.

1. A credentialed school nurse who is registered with the California Department of Health Services (DHS) and holds a school audiometrist certificate pursuant to 17 CCR Section 2950 (a) or (b).
2. A person with a valid special credential authorizing the teaching of lip-reading or the teaching of the deaf and hard of hearing; or a person with a standard teaching credential with specialized preparation in the area of the deaf and hard of hearing or in the area of speech and hearing handicapped; or a person who holds a certificate of registration to serve as a school audiometrist issued by DHS pursuant to *Education Code* Section 49454.

Non-credentialed individuals certified by the Department of Health Services (DHS) as having fulfilled the requirements of 17 CCR Section 2950 (a) and employed by a Such school district employees may provide assist with basic hearing screening for pupils if they work under the immediate supervision of a credentialed school nurse or other duly qualified supervisor of health. Non-credentialed Employees trained under 17 CCR Section 2950(a) are not qualified to perform unsupervised hearing screening or to make referrals for follow-up hearing testing in California public schools.

It has come to our attention that some school districts have been employing individuals to administer hearing screening who do not meet the qualifications described above. These individuals may have taken a one day or one and one-half day course given by Steven Rawiszer, Hearing Conservation Specialist, of the California Department of Health Services. This short course is designed to meet the requirements for certification through the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program. These certified individuals can only perform screenings in a doctor's office or at a Head Start Program and are not qualified to use an audiometer in public schools pursuant to *Education Code* Section 49454.

A school district may also contract for the provision of testing with an agency authorized to perform such services pursuant to *Education Code* Section 49452. These contract agencies may provide basic hearing screening for pupils if they work under the supervision of a credentialed school nurse.

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Enclosed is a copy of the *Education Code* and *CCR* sections pertaining to public school hearing screening. If you have questions about personnel authorized to provide mandated hearing testing in the public schools, please contact Steve Rawiszer, Hearing Conservation Specialist (DHS), at (916) 323-8087 or by e-mail at srawisze@dhs.ca.gov, or Linda Davis-Aldritt, RN, School Nurse Consultant, California Department of Education, at (916) 319-0284 or by e-mail at ldavisal@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Sue Stickel, Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction Branch



Marian Dalsey, MD, Acting Chief
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MD/SS:lda
Enclosures